



THE KABAH UNKNOWN

12 UNASKED QUESTIONS
ABOUT ITS DEEP AND HIDDEN PAST

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Introduction

The most recognizable symbol of Islam is without a doubt the Kabah. We know it as the black, cuboid structure that millions of Muslims visit every year.

But how much of its rich past is actually known and appreciated? The Black Stone isn't the only stone from Jannah; the Kabah didn't always have 4 corners; and it existed long before Ibrahim.

The goal of this ebook is to establish a deep, authentic connection with the holiest place on Earth. Discover its secrets, unearth its gems, and answer questions only few have thought to ask.

1 What is Your Connection with the Kabah?

The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said about those unable to join him on the path to Allah, "in Madinah, you have brothers, who every time you crossed a valley or travelled a road, they shared with you in the reward. They were kept behind by legitimate reasons."¹

People's connection with the Kabah is of different levels. The stronger your connection with the Kabah and longing for its company, the more you share in the reward of those physically present in Makkah.

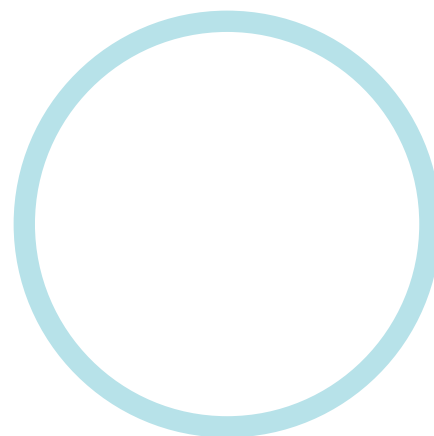
Do a quick self-assessment before starting this ebook. When you're done reading, come back and reassess.

1. Those whose bodies and hearts are in Makkah.
2. Those whose bodies are in Makkah but hearts are elsewhere.
3. Those whose bodies are elsewhere but hearts are in Makkah.
4. Those whose bodies and hearts are nowhere near Makkah.

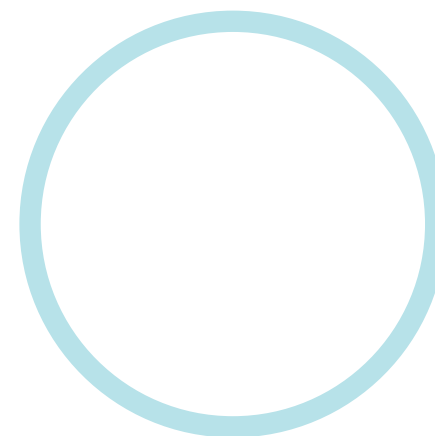
How intensely is your longing to be with the Kabah?
On a scale of 1-10, rate this intensity and write it in the circle below.

10 = overwhelming and 1 = unconcerned

Before starting this Ebook



After finishing this Ebook



¹ Sunan ibn Majah #2765

2 Why is the Kabah the House of Allah?

It is absolutely incorrect and unbefitting to say the Kabah is a place where Allah (swt) lives. It is just as profane to say “*naqat Allah*” (the she-camel of Allah)² is what Allah rides, *subhanah*.

When Allah (swt) attributes a person or thing to Himself, it is a way of honouring and raising its status. The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said, “O people, Allah made Makkah sacred the day He created the heavens and the earth, and it is sacred until the Day of Resurrection.”³



11 Ways the Kabah is Honoured

1. It is the first place to ever be established for worship.⁴
2. Allah commanded Ibrahim to purify His House⁵ from shirk and evil.
3. It is a place of refuge, security and tranquility for people.
4. It is the centre of our religion and the focus point of our prayer.
5. Allah selected among the best of His creation to build His House: Jibreel (*alayhissalam*) as architect, Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*) as engineer, and Ismail (*alayhissalam*) as labourer.
6. Allah protected His House from Abraha and the Army of the Elephant in a spectacular, cataclysmic event.
7. The trees and plants are to be left undisturbed and uncut.
8. The birds and animals are not to be hunted or even terrified.
9. Any lost or unclaimed property is to be left untouched no matter how negligible.
10. Whoever spits towards the Qiblah, will be resurrected on the Day of Judgement with his spit on his face⁶.
11. We are commanded not to face the *Qiblah* or give it our backs when urinating or defecating outdoors⁷. Some scholars even add indoors.

DID YOU KNOW?

Quraish used to build their homes without corners (i.e. round) to honour the Kabah and distinguish its unique structure.

² As mentioned in Quran 91:13 ³ Sunan ibn Majah Vol. 4, Book 25, Hadith 3109 ⁴ Quran 3:96 ⁵ Quran 2:125 ⁶ Abu Dawud and others

⁷ Sunan an-Nasa'i Vol. 1, Book 1, Hadith 21 (and other narrations)

3 So What Does "Kabah" Even Mean?

The linguistic definitions of the root letters *kaf*, *'ayn*, *baa* (ك ع ب) are

1. to be full and round
2. swelling, protruding, that which sticks out
3. to make cubic, to cube, to dice

That's why "*ka'b*" (كعب) can refer to a heel, a knob, or even a woman's breast. All these are things that stand out and are unlevelled.

Makkah is a flat valley land in which the Kabah indeed sticks out. The people of Quraish used to be afraid to build their homes with corners fearing they would dishonour the unique shape of the Kabah.

The first known person to build a cubed home was Humaid ibn Zuhair. The people of Quraish wrote poems anticipating Humaid's demise for imitating the Kabah. Upon seeing no destruction befall Humaid, the practice of building cubed homes began.

The word Kabah was mentioned twice in the Quran, both times in Surat Al-Maidah (95 and 97).

جَعَلَ اللَّهُ الْكَعْبَةَ الْيَتَّى الْحَرَامَ قِيَامًا لِلنَّاسِ

Allah has made the Kabah, the Sacred House, upright for the people ⁸.

That's Strange

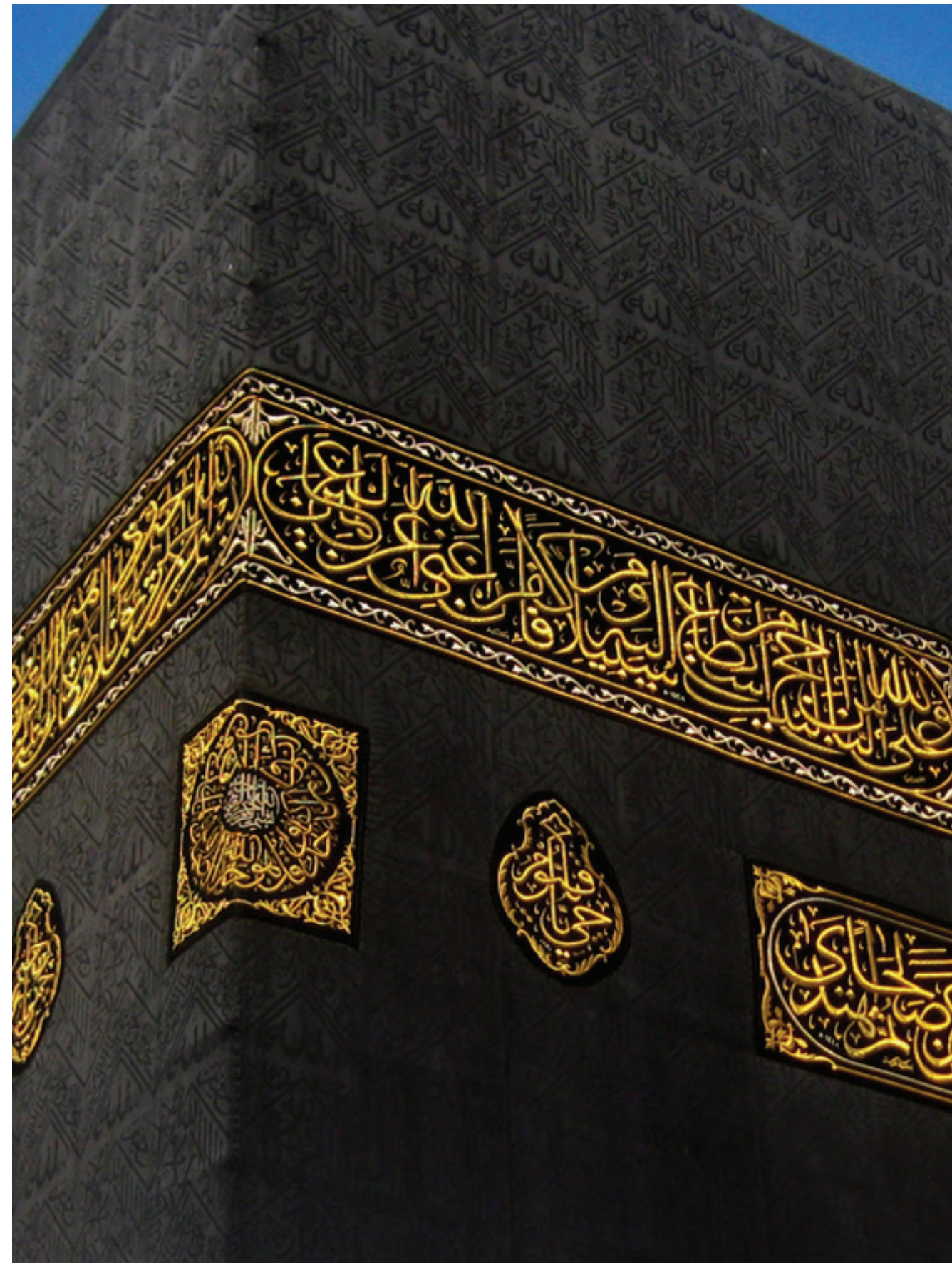
Surprised to see "round" as one of the meanings of Kabah? Read on to see how this meaning actually fits its **original shape!**



It's Also Known As...

1. *Al-Bayt* (The House) - mentioned 15 times in the Quran. It is called a "house" because it has walls and a roof. Bayti (My House) was mentioned three times in the Quran.
2. *Al-Bayt Al-Haraam* and *Al-Bayt Al-Muharram* (The Sacred House) - the former was mentioned twice in the Quran. *Al-Muharram* means "that which is made sacred" (i.e. made forbidden to commit sins in it or any act of violence or injustice). *Al-Haraam* describes the nature of the place as sacred (i.e. the place Allah honoured and made special).
3. *Al-Ateeq* - mentioned twice in the Quran. There is more than one meaning:
 - A. Ancient - the Kabah is the first house ever built for worship, at least as far back as Ibrahim if not older (read on for that riveting discussion).
 - B. Liberator - the Kabah frees servants from their sins and saves them from Hell fire.
 - C. Liberated - Allah freed the Kabah from being destroyed by dictators or pagans. It was also freed from ever being owned by another being. No king ever claimed ownership over the Kabah. Until this day, rulers of the land are entitled "custodians".
 - D. Beautiful or Honourable - the Kabah might be simple in structure, but without a doubt takes the breath away.
4. *Al-Qiblah* - the direction in which we pray.
5. *Al-Dawwar* - that which people go around.

There are many other names that have been given to the Kabah, but these are the most commonly used.



4 Was Ibrahim the First to Build the Kabah?

We know Ibrahim built the Kabah with Ismail (*alayhumassalam*) but was he the first? Not surprisingly, there is a difference of opinion.

1. Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*) - this is the opinion of many scholars like Ibn Kathir, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn ul-Qayyim, Al-Uthaimeen and others. It's a famous opinion using the evidence from Quran and Sunnah that Ibrahim and Ismail both built the Kabah. They state that there is no strong evidence of construction by anyone else before them.
2. Adam (*alayhissalam*) - this is the opinion of Ibn Al-Jawzi, Ibn Hajar, Al- Amin Al-Shinqiti and others. The argument made is that since the Kabah was the first place of worship established for people⁹, then it is impossible to believe there was no place of worship in the entire period from Adam to Ibrahim (*alayhumassalam*).
3. Sheeth (Seth) son of Adam (*alayhissalam*) - proof was not found for this opinion.
4. Angels - this is the opinion of Abu Jafar Al-Baqir

There are many narrations proving **the House of Allah existed before Ibrahim** (*alayhissalam*). Among them are:

1. Allah commanded Ibrahim and Ismail to purify His House¹⁰ proving that there was a House prior to Ibrahim contaminated with shirk and injustice. If Ibrahim was the first, then there would not have been idols or any form of shirk that needed purification.
2. Allah commanded Ibrahim to raise the foundation of the House¹¹ also proving that the foundation already existed and needed to be risen, revived and built upon.
3. When Allah commanded Ibrahim to leave Hajir and Ismail behind in Makkah, Ibrahim walked to a place hidden from Hajir and **faced the Kabah**¹². In His Dua to Allah, he said, "O our Lord, I have settled my offspring in an uncultivated valley **near your Sacred House**."¹³ Note: this was well before Allah commanded Ibrahim and Ismail to "raise the foundation" since Ismail was still a baby.
4. The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said that the House of Allah when Hajir discovered Zamzam was on a high place resembling a hillock, and when torrents came, they flowed to its right and left.¹⁴

There is plenty of evidence proving the House of Allah existed before Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*). However, we cannot state with 100% certainty who it was that built it first.

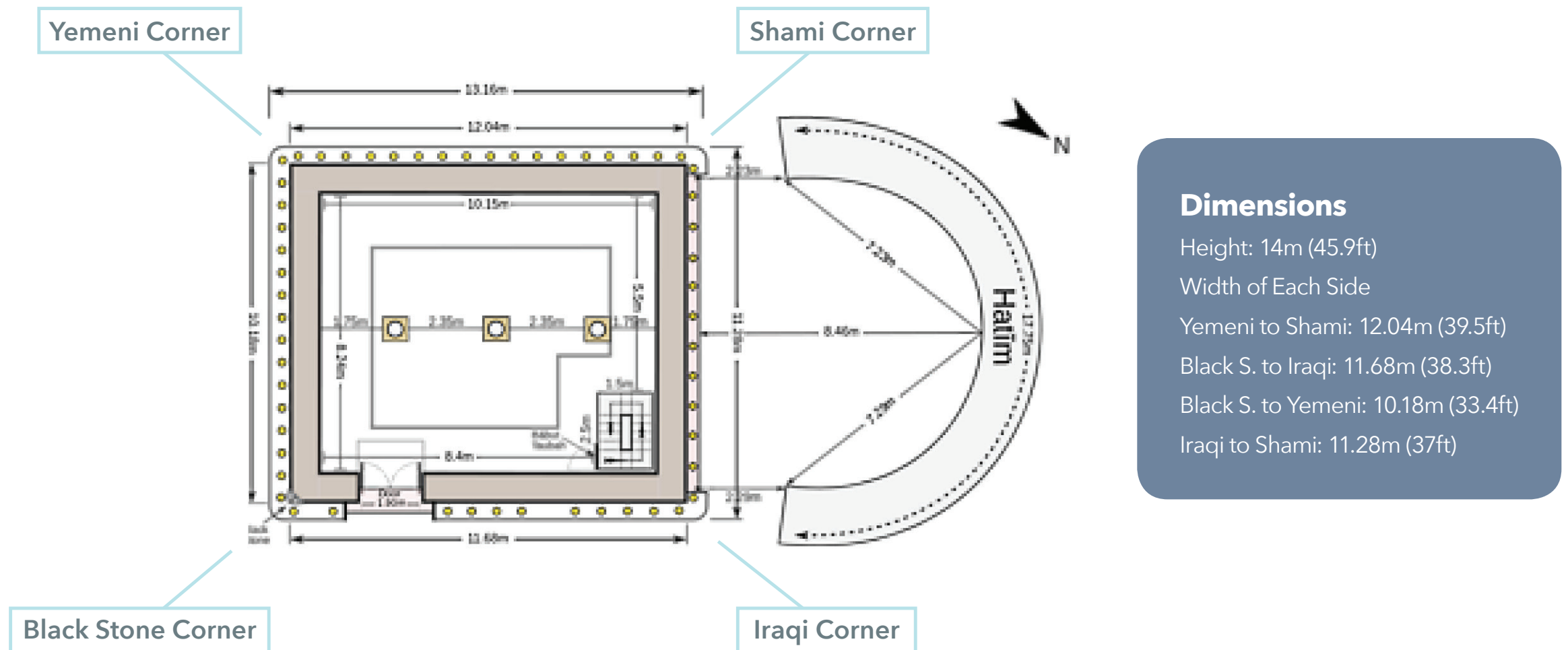
DID YOU KNOW?

Jibril (*alayhissalam*) told Hajir when she found Zamzam that her baby and his father would build the Kabah.

5 Was the Kabah Always "Cubed"?

Today's Blueprint

Some assume the Kabah today is cubed, but none of the four sides are actually equal. "Trapezoid" would be the more accurate term.



The Arabs named the corners based on the relative geographic direction they pointed, even if they may not be completely accurate. They could just as easily be named the African Corner, the European Corner, the Asian Corner or the American Corner.

The Construction of Ibrahim

Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*) came to his son Ismail (*alayhissalam*) to inform him of Allah's command to build the Kabah. He pointed to the risen area of the valley where the foundation of the Kabah was established and began to work.

The Two Stones from Jannah

Ismail collected stones for his father who then placed them one above the other. His style of building did not require cement to keep solid. As the House grew higher, Ibrahim was no longer able to reach the higher level. This is when something miraculous happened.

Jibreel (*alayhissalam*) came down with a stone from Jannah for Ibrahim to stand on. This special stone lifted and gave him higher reach. While he stood above ground, Ismail continued to hand him stones for construction.

This special stone of Jannah also became soft and made a deep imprint of the feet of Ibrahim. This is what we now know as *Maqam Ibrahim*.

Allah (swt) commanded Ibrahim and Ismail to leave a vacant space in one of the corners of the Kabah. Jibreel again came down with a stone from Jannah to be placed as the cornerstone of the House of Allah. This is what we now know as *Al-Hijr Al-Aswad* (The Black Stone).

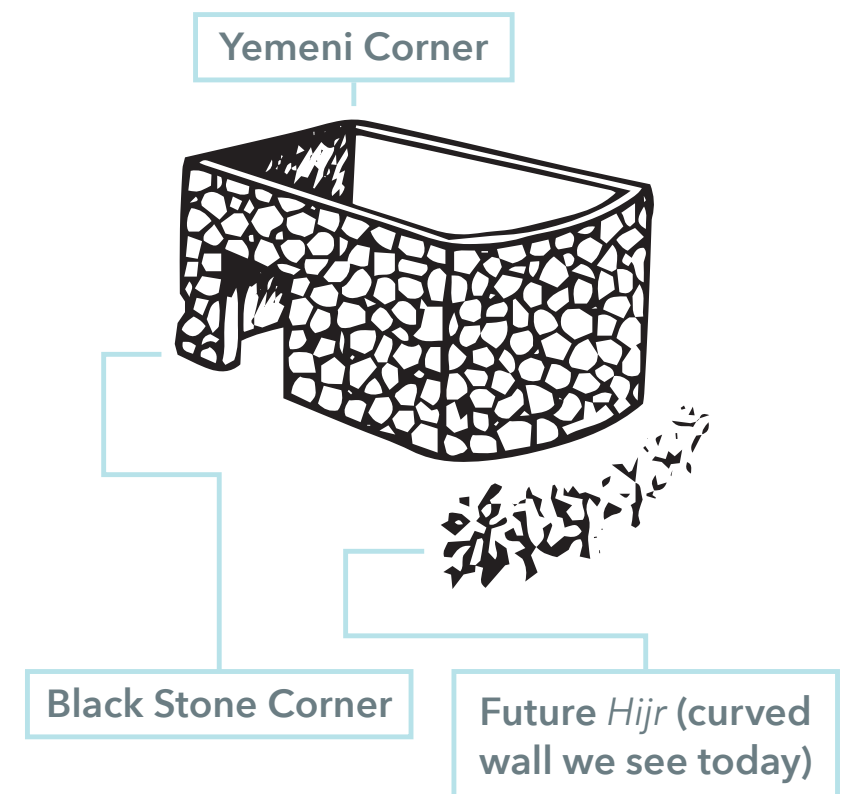
The Original Blueprint of Ibrahim

The Kabah he built was not as we see it today. In fact it was significantly different.

1. It only had two corners (the Black Stone and Yemeni corners). The other side of the Kabah was curved.
2. There was no roof.
3. The distance between the curved wall and the opposite wall was much longer, giving the Kabah a "rectangular prism" look as opposed to today's cubed look.
4. It was much shorter in height at 4.5m (14.8ft) as opposed to today's 14m (45.9ft).
5. Two doorways (without doors) that started at ground level (as opposed to today which is one raised above the ground). This allowed for a smooth, one-way stream of traffic (one entry and the other exit). It also let rainwater out to avoid flooding inside the Kabah (remember there was no roof).

DID YOU KNOW?

Maqam Ibrahim is also a stone from Jannah that helped Ibrahim reach the higher levels of the Kabah.



Dimensions

Height: 4.5m (14.8ft)
 Width of Each Side
 Yemeni to Curve: 15.3m (50.1ft)
 Black S. to Curve: 16m (52.5ft)
 Black S. to Yemeni: 9.8m (32ft)
 Curved Wall: 11m (36ft)

6 How Many Times was the Kabah Reconstructed?

Since the time of Ibrahim's construction of the Kabah, it was remodelled and/or reconstructed at least six times.

The Reconstruction of Al-'Amaliqa and Jurhum

Al-'Amaliqa (The Amalekites) are a perished Arab nation (*Al-Arab Al-Baidah*) descending from a man named 'Imliq, the great great grandson of Nuh (*alayhissalam*)¹⁵. They found the need to rebuild the Kabah but kept the original dimensions.

Jurhum was the tribe Ismail (*alayhissalam*) married into and settled with in Makkah. After many generations, they too found the need to rebuild the Kabah and also kept the original dimensions.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Arabs kept an heirloom hanging on the Kabah's gutter. It was the horns of Ismail's ram (the one that saved him from sacrifice). They treasured it as a memory of their heritage.

What happened to it? Read on.

¹⁵ 'Imliq ibn Lawidh ibn Iram ibn Sam ibn Nuh

The Reconstruction of Quraish

The Double Whammy: Fire and Flood

Five years before prophethood, when the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) was just 35 years old, the Kabah was struck by both a fire and a flood.

The accidental fire started when a woman dropped charcoal (for incense) on the Kabah's curtain. Since the Kabah was partially made of wood, it quickly spread and weakened much of the structure. They lost the heirloom of Ismail's Ram in this fire. Shortly thereafter, a flood caused a large portion of the already weakened Kabah to fall.

The people of Makkah were terrified. The Year of the Elephant was only 35 years ago, and its cataclysmic events were still fresh in their memory. They were scared to bring down the rest of the Kabah to begin its restoration.

They decided to rebuild when they heard a Roman ship had sunk off the coast of the Red Sea (Jeddah). Roman wood was known to be of premium quality.

To honour the Kabah, Quraish also knew the money used to purchase the wood had to be pure with strict conditions. The money could not be the result of:

1. *Riba* (usury)
2. Prostitution
3. Stealing

With these simple conditions, Quraish, with all its chieftains and successful businesspeople, struggled to raise funds of pure source. They could not afford to purchase enough wood to reconstruct the Kabah to its original dimensions. The leftover space, called the *Hateem*, was marked by stones.

DID YOU KNOW?

Anyone can pray "inside" the Kabah. The *Hateem* (space enclosed inside the *Hijr*) is partially from the original foundation

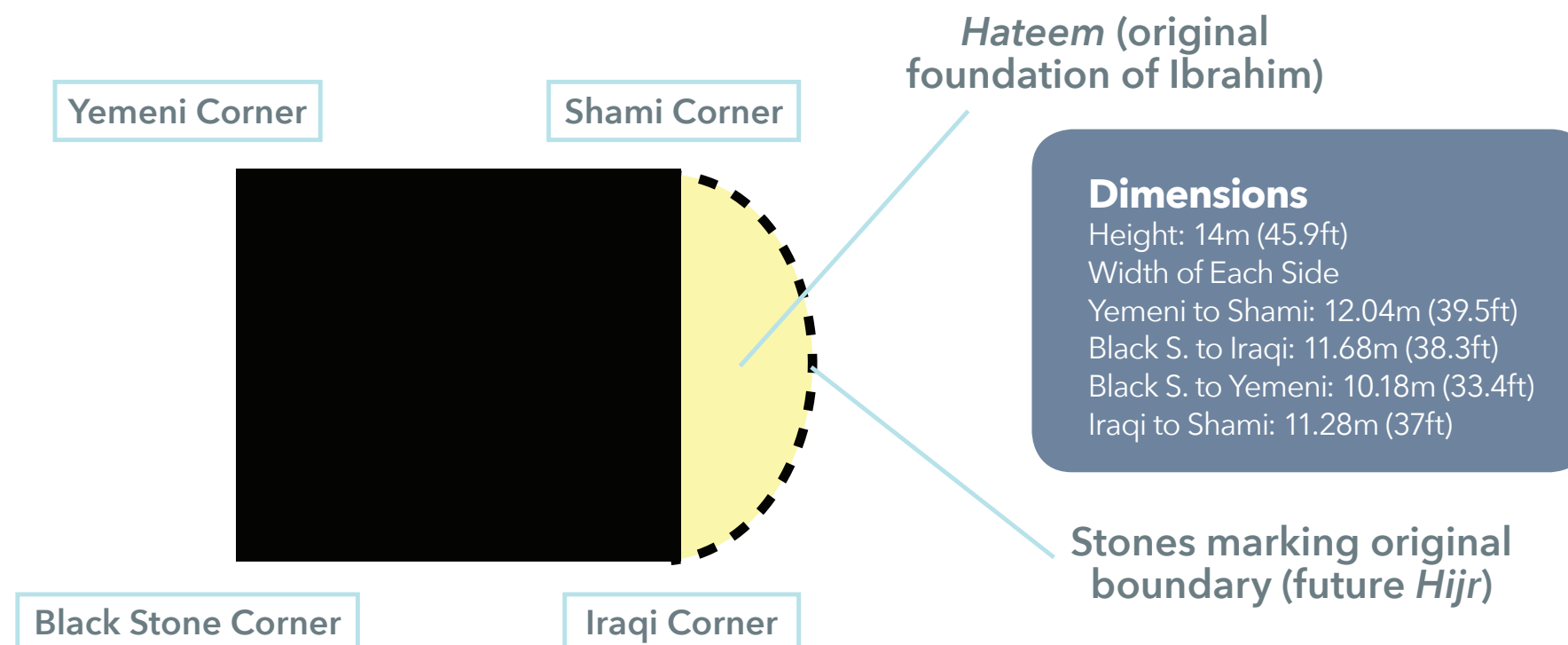
The Blueprint of Quraish

The changes Quraish made to Ibrahim's original blueprint are as follows:

1. Raised the Kabah from 4.5m (14.8ft) to 9m (29.5ft).
2. Added a roof that was previously nonexistent.
3. Closed the second doorway since the presence of a roof now meant no internal flooding.
4. Raised the first doorway and added a locked door. Entering was now done by permission only.
5. Shortened the distance between the two corners and curved wall (due to lack of material) by 3.26m (10.7ft) on one side and 4.32m (14.2ft) on the other side.
6. Converted the once curved wall into a flat wall with two corners.
7. Added stones to mark the original curved boundary of the Kabah (later known as *Hijr*).

Public Service Announcement

Not all of the *Hateem* is part of the original foundation of Ibrahim. It's only within 3-4m from the wall of the Kabah.



The Prophet's Involvement in Building the Kabah

The Prophet Muhammad (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), then 35 years old, participated in the rebuilding. Carrying blocks of stone on his bare neck and shoulders, he was cut and bruised. His uncle, Al-Abbas, advised him to remove his lower garment from around his waist to use as padding for his neck. This meant exposing his private area, a norm for the people of Quraish.

As he was about to comply, Allah caused him to faint. Moments later, he awoke in a panic, securing his lower garment tightly around his waist. As a special honour, Allah prevented His Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) from ever being exposed.

The Black Stone Dispute

Once the Kabah's reconstruction was complete, the final task was to place the honoured Black Stone back in its spot. The chieftains of Quraish disputed as to who would do the honour.

After an exasperated deadlock, they finally agreed that whoever walked in the door next would be charged with mediating between them. Lo and behold, the first to enter was the Prophet Muhammad (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), which came as a relief to all of them for he was *Al-Amin* (the Truthful).

He placed his cloak flat on the ground and placed the Black Stone in the middle of it. He asked the leaders of each of the tribes to take a side and lift the cloak together. When they brought it to its corner in the Kabah, the Prophet himself carried the Black Stone and placed it in its spot.

With that, the Prophet's wisdom avoided potential civil war and bloodshed.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Only the tip
of the Black
Stone is black.
The unexposed
portion of the
stone is still its
original colour.

Read on

The Reconstruction of Abdullah ibn Azzubair

In 60 AH, Abdullah ibn Azzubair (*radi Allahu anhu*) refused to swear allegiance to the new *khalifah* of the *Umayyad* Dynasty, Yazid ibn Mu'awiyah. Ibn Azzubair was declared Ameer by the people of Makkah and the Hijaz region.

In attempts to quash the rebellion, in 64 AH, Yazid sent an army to Makkah to besiege it, catapulting boulders into the city. As collateral damage, the Kabah was heavily damaged: demolished and burned.

When the siege was finally lifted upon Yazid's death, Ibn Azzubair planned to reconstruct the Kabah upon the original dimensions of Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*). Abdullah ibn Abbas (*radi Allahu anhu*) advised him against it and to keep it as it was during the time of the Prophet. He said, "The people have accepted Islam and died upon these dimensions." He feared that in such an unstable time, changing the dimensions (something the four Rightly Guided *Khulafaa* did not do) would cause even more *fitnah*.

After praying *istikhara* for three days, Ibn Azzubair decided to go ahead with rebuilding the Kabah upon Ibrahim's original dimensions. He gave his reasoning as follows:

1. The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) did not return the original dimensions because he feared the Mushrikeen would say that he was a conquering ruler coming to change their way of life. As such, he avoided that *fitnah*.
2. The Prophet did not have the means to do rebuild.

With that, Ibn Azzubair declared to the people of Makkah, "I have the means and I do not fear anyone." He erected four large pillars in each corner of the foundation and placed a tent over them. Construction began within the tent, hidden from the people's eyes. It wasn't until construction completed that the new structure was revealed.

The Blueprint of Abdullah ibn Azzubair

The changes Ibn Azzubair made to the Qurashi-designed Kabah:

1. Re-added the 3-4m taken out by Quraish.
2. Returned the curved wall.
3. Made it even higher: 13.5m (44.3ft), closely reaching today's height by 50cm (1.7ft).
4. Returned the second doorway and kept both open at ground level.

Yemeni



Black

Hijr

Dimensions

Height: 13.5m (44.3ft)
 Width of Each Side
 Yemeni to Curve: 15.3m (50.1ft)
 Black S. to Curve: 16m (52.5ft)
 Black S. to Yemeni: 9.8m (32ft)
 Curved Wall: 11m (36ft)

The Reconstruction of Abdulmalik ibn Marwan

Upon the death of Ibn Azzubair at the hands of Al-Hajjaj ibn Yusuf, news reached the current *Umayyad* ruler, Abdulmalik ibn Marwan, about the changes made to the Kabah. Angered, ibn Marwan cursed ibn Azzubair for changing the *deen* of Allah.

He then ordered the undoing of all of ibn Azzubair's changes (except for its height). The higher the Kabah, the more honoured, and so it remained at 13.5m (44.3ft) with the original Qurashi design (the single, raised and locked door returned along with the shortened dimensions and *Hijr*).

It wasn't until after the changes were made that many witnesses recounted to Ibn Marwan that Aisha (*radi Allahu anha*) heard the Prophet say, "If your people were not so new to Islam, I would have returned Ibrahim's original foundation."¹⁶

Upon hearing this hadith of the Prophet's intention, ibn Marwan felt deep remorse saying, "I wish you told me earlier. I would not have undone ibn Azzubair's changes."

**The Prophet (sal
Allahu alayhi
wassalam) said**

**"If your people were not so new
to Islam, I would have returned
Ibrahim's original foundation."**



The Attempted Reconstruction of Harun Al-Rashid

Since the last reconstruction, the people of Makkah continued to honour and take care of the Kabah. Many generations passed before Harun Al-Rashid became ruler of the Abassid Dynasty.

Looking to build a legacy and to correct the misdeeds of rival Umayyad ruler, Abdulmalik ibn Marwan, Harun Al-Rashid made plans to reverse the dimensions of the Kabah back to the foundation of Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*).

Imam Malik urged Al-Rashid to reconsider. He said, "I ask you by Allah, let it be as it is, so that it may not become the sport of kings." If the rulers continue to demolish and rebuild, the Kabah will become a toy, losing its respect and honour from the minds and hearts of people.

Harun Al-Rashid complied and left the Kabah as it was.

Other Reconstructions

The Kabah stood as it was from the time of Abdulmalik ibn Marwan for 966 years.

Ottoman Ruler, Sultan Murad Khan

In 1039 AH, during Ottoman reign, torrential rains flooded Makkah causing many fatalities. One of the sides of the Kabah was completely knocked down, and during reconstruction another side fell. The Kabah had to be completely taken down to restart construction, completed in 1040 AH. This gave us today's exact dimensions.

Saudi Arabian Ruler, King Fahd

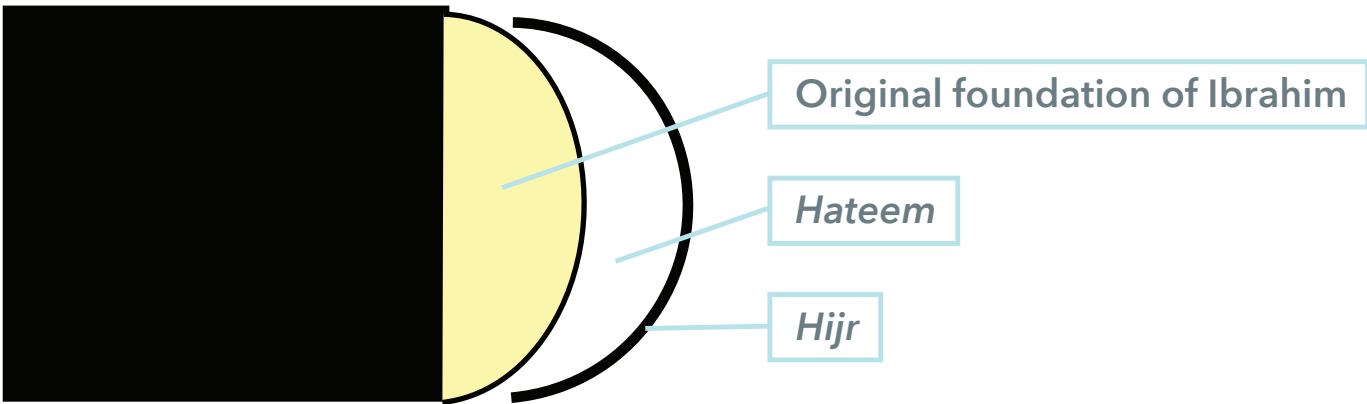
In 1996, about 400 years after the last reconstruction, King Fahd ordered the renovation of the Kabah. He made the following improvements without demolishing:

1. Replaced rotting wood with marble and chemically treated wood.
2. Replaced the roof with a new and improved one.
3. Added a new silver encasing for the Black Stone (as we see it today).
4. Renewed the door partly made out of gold.

The Size of the *Hateem* Today

At some point during the many reconstructions, the *Hijr* (short, curved wall) no longer indicated the accurate foundation of Ibrahim. It is now placed about 4.5m (14.8ft) further out than the original markers.

Therefore, only 3-4m (10-13ft) from the wall of the Kabah is part of the original foundation of Ibrahim.



Summary of Construction

	Height	Key Elements
Ibrahim (<i>alayhissalam</i>)	4.5m	- rectangular prism - 2 corners and 1 curved wall - no roof - 2 ground-level doorways - no doors
Quraish	9m	- shortened to a "cube" - replaced curved wall with flat wall - added a roof - closed 2nd doorway - raised 1st doorway above ground - added locked door
Ibn Azzubair	13.5m	- returned all other elements and dimensions of Ibrahim
Ibn Marwan	13.5m	- returned all elements of dimensions of Quraish
Murad Khan	14m	- no major changes

7 Why was the Kabah Allowed to be Destroyed Many Times?

Allah (swt) protected the Kabah from the plot of Abraha and the Army of the Elephant. Then why was the Kabah allowed to be destroyed so many times after?

The scholars discussed this issue and concluded that before the time of the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), Allah was the One taking care of His House. The mushrikeen were not honoured with this responsibility nor could they claim this virtue on the Day of Judgement.

However, with the coming of the Prophet and Islam, Allah (swt) transferred the responsibility to the Muslims. The Ummah of Muhammad (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) is honoured with the Kabah's custodianship.

That is why the scholars say we see the difference.

**Abdulmuttalib's
Response to Abraha:**

"The House has a Lord to protect it."

8 How Has the Black Stone Transformed?

The Black Stone is placed in the eastern corner of the Kabah about 1.10m (3.6ft) above ground level enclosed in a silver frame.

The Origin of the Stone

The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said: "The Black Stone is from Paradise."¹⁷ Allah (swt) commanded Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*) to designate it as the Kabah's cornerstone.

Abdullah ibn 'Amr narrated, "Jibreel descended with the Black Stone from Paradise and put it where you know, and you are upon much good as long as it is with you, so hold fast to it as much as you can, as it is about to be taken back to where it came from." It is also reported by Amr ibn Al-As that when Allah takes both stones back to Jannah (the Black Stone and *Maqam Ibrahim*), the people will see them in Jannah as big as Mount Abu Qubais (the mountain across from the Kabah).

The Original Size of the Stone

At the time of the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) it was reported to be a cubit long (50cm or 1.65ft). When it was removed and taken by the Qaramatians (read on for this shocking story) in 4 AH, it was also witnessed to be about a cubit long. During the last reconstruction of Ottoman Sultan Murad Khan in 1039 AH, it was witnessed to be half a cubit long and a third of a cubit wide.

Each time the stone was removed, there were consistent reports that **only the tip is black**; whereas the rest of the stone is still its original colour.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

The Black Stone
was stolen and
was missing for
22 years!
Read on.

The Original Colour of the Stone

The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said, "The Black Stone descended from Paradise, and it was whiter than milk, then it was blackened by the sins of the children of Adam."¹⁸ Ibn Abbas (*radi Allahu anhu*) said, "The tip of the stone used to be white. Each time the servant of Allah wipes his hand over the stone, his sin is wiped over it." The sins, kufr, and shirk are wiped away turning the stone black. This is a reminder to all of us that if sins can do this to a stone, imagine what it is doing to our hearts.

What we see is just the tip of the stone that has turned black from the sins of people. The rest of the stone remained unexposed and hence, is still white.

Its Transformations Through Tough Times

The Black Stone has endured a lot in the last 1400 years causing it to lose much of its original pieces.

1. During the siege and attack on Makkah in 64 AH, the Black Stone broke into three pieces. Abdullah ibn Azzubair (*radi Allahu anhu*) melded them together with molten silver.
2. When Harun Al-Rashid was performing Umrah, he noticed that the silver ibn Azzubair used was weakening. So he made holes in the stones and inserted molten silver to strengthen the bond and meld the rest together.
3. The worst thing the Black Stone had gone through was in 317 AH when the *Qaramitah* (Qarmatians), an extreme Ismaili group non-existent today, attacked and desecrated the Sacred Mosque. They killed 13,000 pilgrims during Hajj and dumped their corpses in the well of Zamzam. An estimated 30,000 people (men, women and children) were killed that year in the streets of Makkah.

On the 14th of *Dhul Hijjah* (last day of Eid), they removed the Black Stone with a pickaxe and took it away to their land in eastern Arabia. Their leader claimed that if this was indeed the House of Allah, Allah would not let him desecrate the Kabah. He claimed that he was Allah and that Allah was him.

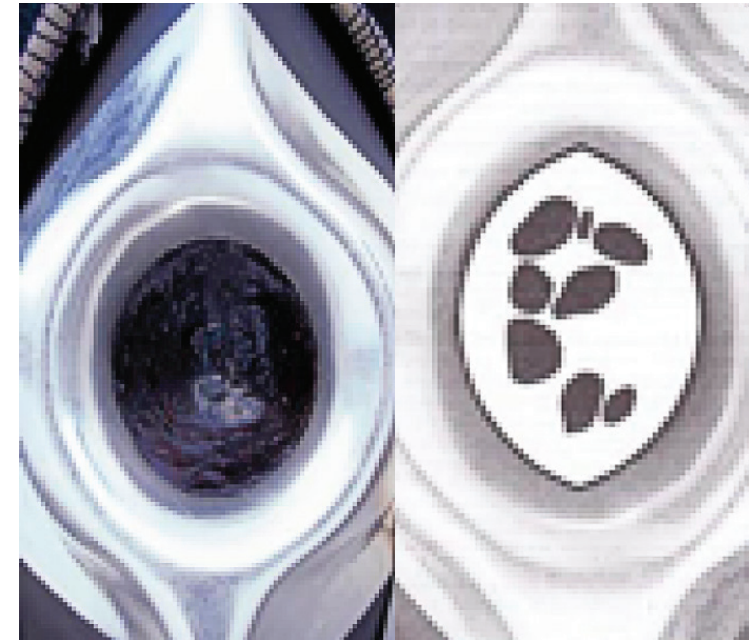
For 22 years, the *Qaramitah* disrespected the Black Stone, storing it in a dumpster with other rocks and filth. When they finally returned it, they transported it on their sickest and weakest camel out of disrespect. The Ameer of Makkah at the time received it in pieces and in a disturbed state. One of the scholars at the time advised the Ameer that the Black Stone is unaffected by fire, so test its authenticity by applying it to fire.

A Moment to Reflect

If sins can turn a stone from Jannah black, imagine what sins can do to your heart.



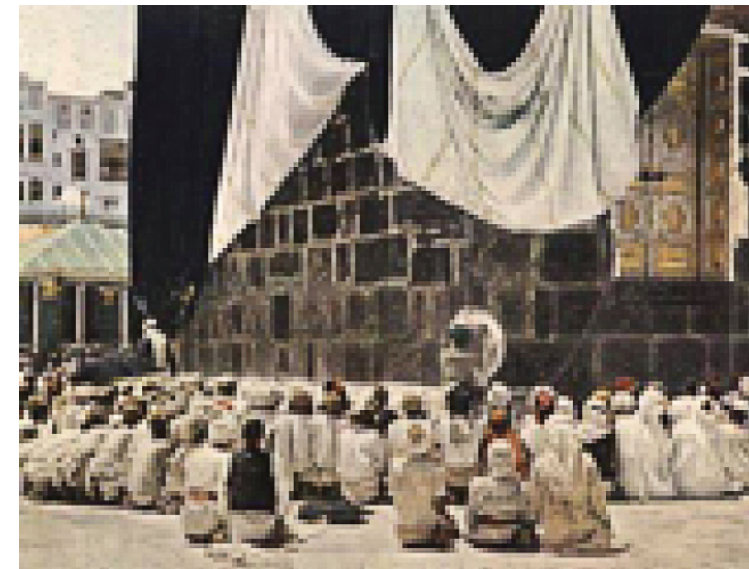
4. There are many other stories of other groups attacking the Black Stone, such as one Roman who snuck into Makkah to strike it with a large axe, but none as extreme and horrifying as the previous story of the *Qaramitah*. There are 6-7 books written solely about the history of the Black Stone¹⁹.
5. Just 60 years ago, only 15 small pieces of the Black Stone were accounted for.
6. Today, due to construction and other incidents, 8 small pieces (the size of dates) are accounted for. These pieces are held together in black clay comprised of amber, wax and musk.



9 What Makes the Yemeni Corner Special?

The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) used to touch both the Black Stone and the Yemeni corner each time he passed by in *tawaf*²⁰. The Black Stone is not only touched but also kissed. Simply greeting these two corners from afar is permitted if one is prevented from getting close.

Remember that with all the changes the Kabah endured since the time of Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*), only these two corners remain erected on the original foundation of Ibrahim. This is why both these corners hold such high virtue with Allah (swt).



¹⁹ The most famous book written about the history of the Black Stone is by Al-Imam Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Husain Al-Jurri (a great *muhaddith* who died in 360 AH).
²⁰ Sunan an-Nasai #2947

10 How is it That We Still Have the Footprints of Ibrahim?

The Size of Ibrahim's Footprints

The preserved footprints of Ibrahim (*alayhissalam*) are held in a large glass encasing 14.5m (47.6ft) away from the Kabah.

The weight of the rocks he carried and the softness of the stone caused Ibrahim's feet to sink deep enough to reach his ankles. One footprint is 10cm (3.9in) deep and the other is 9cm (3.5in) deep. They are 27cm (10.6in) long and 11cm (4.3in) wide.



The Miracle of Maqam Ibrahim

فِيهِ آيَاتٌ بَيِّنَاتٌ مَّقَامُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ

In it are clear signs (such as) the standing place of Ibrahim
(*Maqam Ibrahim*)²¹

Among the signs and blessings of *Maqam Ibrahim* are:

1. It, along with the Black Stone, are stones of Jannah.
2. Idolatry had deep roots in Quraish's history, worshiping rocks and stones. Despite this, the two stones of Jannah were honoured and saved from ever being worshipped. As a result, Muslims honouring *Maqam Ibrahim* cannot be accused of continuing a pagan practice.
3. It is the only remnant left behind of any of our previous prophets.
4. It was protected from ever being destroyed or lost despite the many wars and natural disasters that befell Makkah since the time of Ibrahim. There were many incidents in which a flood washed *Maqam Ibrahim* away to neighbouring valleys only to be found and returned to Makkah. When the *Qaramitah* took the Black Stone, they did not take *Maqam Ibrahim* because one of the people of Quraish hid it in one of the valleys of Makkah.
5. It is a miracle and proof of Ibrahim's existence. It reminds us of his *tawhid* and pure way.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

Ibrahim's
shoe size was
probably 10-11
Mens (US). Not
as big as you
thought?

How to Honour *Maqam Ibrahim*

During the time of Umar (*radi Allahu anhu*), there were narrations of people walking over or around it, indicating it was on the floor. Later it was placed on a pedestal and eventually encased as we see it today.

It is preserved as a reminder for Muslims until the end of time. It is honoured by praying two *rak'at* behind it as commanded by Allah (swt) and His Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*)²².

وَاتَّخِذُوا مِنْ مَّقَامِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ مُصَلًّى

And take from the standing place of Ibrahim a place of prayer.²³

²² Narrated many times among which is Sahih Bukhari #1191, #1192 ²³ Quran 2:125

It is not from Islam to wipe *Maqam Ibrahim* or to seek from it any blessings. There are no reports of the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), the Sahaba, or the pious predecessors touching or kissing *Maqam Ibrahim*. In fact, many scholars of the early generations²⁴ specifically cited that doing so is not authentic and even bid'ah (innovation).

As for making *dua* behind the Maqam, many scholars recommended it, including Imam Nawawi. Hasan Al-Basri wrote, "There is no city on earth that has 50 different places where *dua* is accepted except in Makkah," and cited one of them as behind *Maqam Ibrahim*.

However, there is no authentic narration from the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) or the Sahabah except the praying of 2 *rak'at* as stated above. The scholars argue that prayer is meant for *dua* and therefore it is recommended.

One of the popular *duas* recommended (although not from Prophetic tradition as previously stated) is:

"O Allah, I am your slave, son of your slave. I came with many sins and this is the place where people seek refuge from Hellfire, so forgive me. You are the Most Forgiving, the Most Merciful."

11 Where does Zamzam Really Come From?

The Source of Zamzam

Zamzam water was first dug up by Angel Jibreel (*alayhissalam*) as mentioned in the *hadith* narrated by Ibn 'Abbas (*radi Allahu anhu*):

DID YOU KNOW?

Abu Dharr (*radi Allahu anhi*) had nothing but Zamzam water for 30-40 days, never feeling hungry, and noticed he was gaining weight!

²⁴ Mujahid, Qatadah, Nawawi and others



"When Hajir reached Marwa (for the last time) she heard a voice and asked herself to be quiet and listened attentively. She heard the voice again and said, 'O, (whoever you may be)! You have made me hear your voice; have you got something to help me?' And behold! She saw an angel at the place of Zamzam, digging the earth with his heel (or his wing), till water flowed from that place. She started to make something like a basin around it, using her hand in this way, and started filling her water-skin with water with her hands, and the water was flowing out after she had scooped some of it."²⁵

Throughout history Zamzam was maintained and cared for: first by the tribe of Jurhum until they were defeated and expelled by the tribes of Bakr and Khuza'a. Before leaving, Jurhum packed the well of Zamzam with their treasures, then sealed and buried the well, never to be found for many generations. The people of Makkah were denied access to Zamzam for so long that it became a myth by the time Quraish took over in Makkah.

It wasn't until Abdul Muttallib, the grandfather of the Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), saw a dream that the well's location was exposed. He awoke and excavated the area uncovering the well and granting access to its drinking water.

The Source of Zamzam

Studies tried to determine the exact source of Zamzam, but none were 100% conclusive. Some reported that it was produced from bedrock underneath the Kabah, while some even narrow it down to underneath the Black Stone itself.

While the primary source is still a mystery, Zamzam does sometimes mix with rainfall, although scarcely.

Zamzam was found to have absolutely zero microbes. This is a miracle from Allah (swt) as it is impossible to find this with any other form of water.

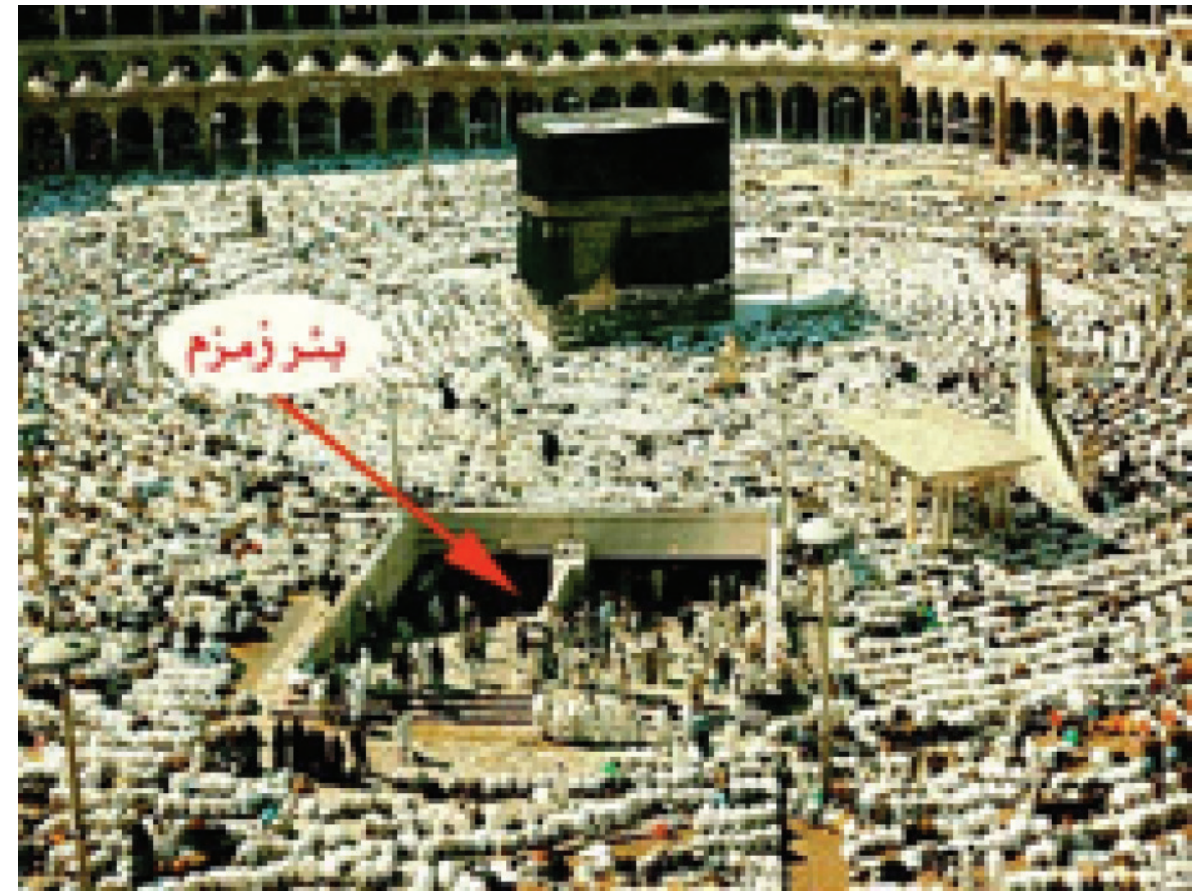
The Custodianship of the Well

Throughout history, especially during the Abassid dynasty and modern days, leadership in Makkah maintained the well with special care. Priority was given to serving the *hujjaj* (pilgrims) efficiently and effectively.

In 1979, the Saudi Arabian government established in Makkah *Suqyaa Zamzam*, a department tasked with Zamzam water alone: research, maintenance, sanitization, etc.

As of 2013, there were over 14,000 coolers distributed throughout the Sacred Mosque, delivering Zamzam directly and conveniently to visitors around the clock. Even more coolers are added during Ramadan and Hajj seasons. In addition, there were 1,073 water fountains. Since 2013, there was additional expansion of the Sacred Mosque, adding even more coolers and fountains.

The ice used in the coolers is also made of Zamzam water.



The Location of the Well

Up until the last generation or two, the well of Zamzam was accessible to everyone. Pilgrims came with their own containers to fill directly from the well's bucket. Divers reached deep into the well of Zamzam and recovered ancient coins, jugs, and other treasures.

The well of Zamzam is located 20m (65.6ft) from the Kabah and is 35m (114.8ft) deep. It pumps 11-18L (2.9-4.8gal) per second despite the scarcity of rainfall and waterbodies in the area²⁶.

Today, the well is in a basement room where it can be seen from behind glass panels.

²⁶ The official Sacred Mosque website offers detailed information concerning Zamzam, its maintenance, technical properties, and other interesting facts: <http://gph.gov.sa/index.cfm>



The Virtues and Miracles of Drinking Zamzam

Water tends to be the symbol of purity, but Zamzam is the ultimate form of purity. Let's contrast regular water with Zamzam:

1. Water revives life in the body; whereas Zamzam revives life in the heart.
2. Drinking Zamzam abundantly is a sign of *eman* (faith); whereas drinking it meagrely (not drinking to one's fill) is a sign of *nifaq* (hypocrisy) ²⁷.
3. Water quenches thirst; whereas Zamzam also satisfies hunger.
4. Zamzam is a cure to every ailment. One of its names is *Al-'Afiyah* (The Cure).
5. Water carries microbes; whereas Zamzam does not.
6. Drinking water is a habit, but drinking Zamam is *'ibadah* (worship).
7. Water is a favour from Allah; whereas Zamzam also brings us closer to Him.
8. Zamzam is a food that nourishes. There are multiple narrations of Sahaba and early scholars who lasted weeks and months without food or water except Zamzam (and even gaining weight) ²⁸.
9. Zamzam is blessed and is the best water on the face of the Earth.

12 What Are the Virtues of Visiting the Mother of All Cities?

One of the names of the holiest place on Earth is *Umm Al-Quraa* (Mother of All Cities). Some scholars and topographers have discussed what this means. It is our spiritual centre (*Qiblah*), our source of safety and serenity, and even our geographic global centre.

1. Each step taken towards the Sacred Mosque is a reward and a forgiven sin²⁹. Traveling by plane or car does not take away from this immense reward. The distance crossed is counted as the number of steps it would have taken if one had walked, *in shaa Allah*.

²⁷ Sunan ibn Majah #3061 ²⁸ The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said to Abu Dharr (*radi Allahu anhu*), who had stayed near the Kabah and its coverings for 40 days and nights with no food or drink other than Zamzam: "How long have you been here?" Abu Dharr said: "I have been here for 30 days and nights." The Prophet said, "Who has been feeding you?" He said, "I have had nothing but Zamzam water, and I have gotten so fat that I have folds of fat on my stomach. I do not feel any of the tiredness or weakness of hunger and I have not become thin." The Prophet said: "Indeed, it is blessed, it is food that nourishes." Sahih Muslim #2473

²⁹ Sahih Bukhari #647

2. Whoever performs seven circuits (*tawaf*) around the Kabah, it is as though he freed a slave. Each step during this is 10 rewards, 10 forgiven sins, and raised 10 levels in Jannah.
3. The greatest act one can do in Makkah is tawaf. It can also be argued that it's better than salah because it is an act of worship that can only be done in Makkah. The Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*) said, "Speak little when you are performing tawaf for you are in a state of salah."³⁰
4. After completing Hajj or Umrah, one walks away free of sin like a newborn³¹.

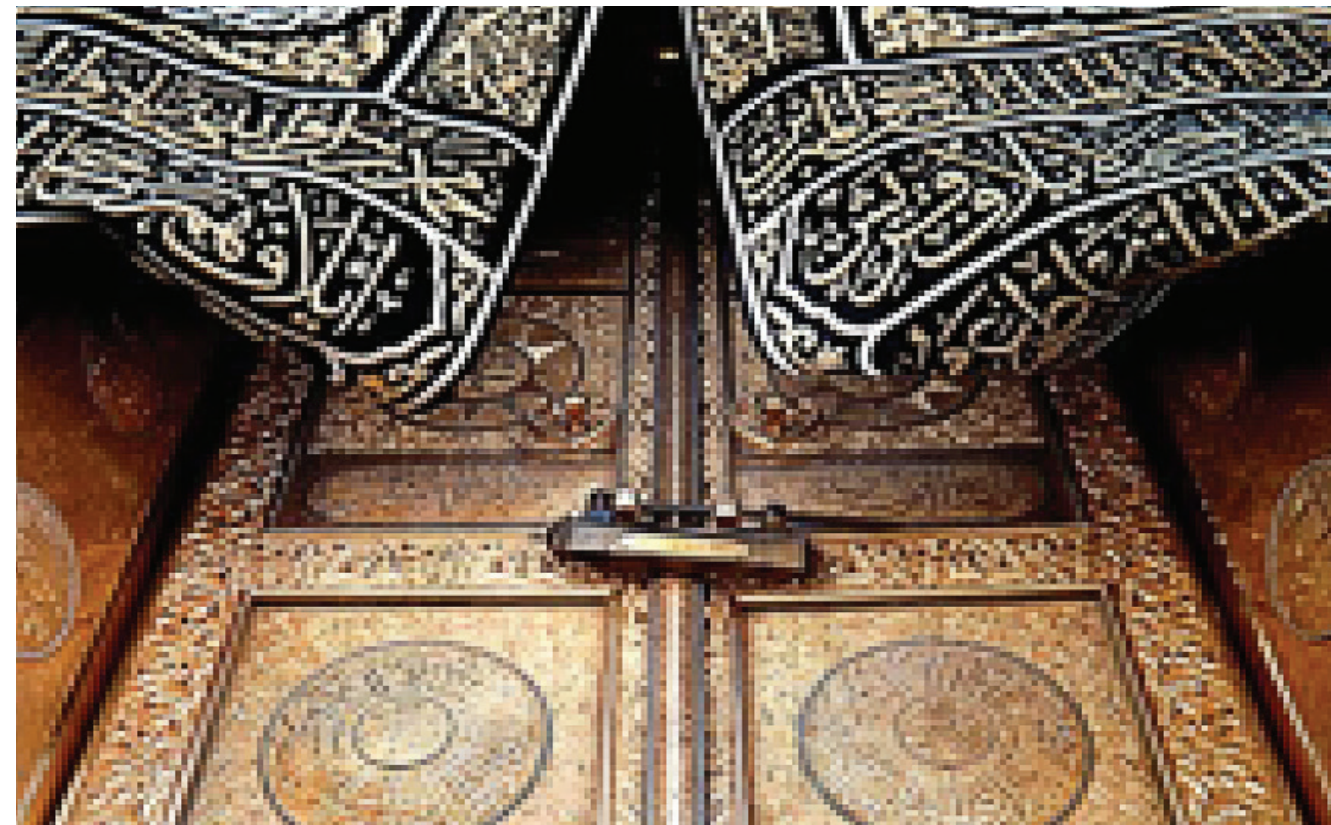
The Spiritual Traveller

No doubt, the Sacred Mosque stands on holy ground. The virtues, blessings and miracles are innumerable. Its magnetic beauty calls upon every Muslim no matter the distance.

If circumstances do not allow traveling to Makkah, then show Allah your longing for it. Increase in your Dua, begging Allah to make your trip feasible and to enjoy the company of the Kabah. Make your bond stronger with the birthplace of our Prophet (*sal Allahu alayhi wassalam*), the holiest place on Earth.

May Allah (swt) make us of those accepted in its company and not those prevented.

Remember: return to the self-assessment on the first page to reassess your connection with the Kabah.





About AlMaghrib Institute

We started up in 2002 with a simple question - how could we teach you Islam in a way that was fun, social, quality, spiritual, and oh yeah, academic?

We asked around, and it turned out people wanted teachers who knew their stuff and who didn't turn learning Islam into a snoozefest, they wanted super quality and they didn't want endless weeks of lectures that would get in the way of their busy lives.

We listened. And AlMaghrib Institute was born.

Based upon an ethos of excellence and a refusal to accept excuses for poor quality, we offered single and double-weekend seminars, with the most engaging instructors around, using top professional multi-media materials. Since that time, your response has been insane! You've asked us to establish chapters (also known as Qabeelahs) in over 40 cities worldwide, from North America, to Europe, to Asia, to the Middle East and to Australia too! Amazingly, we've now taught the Islamic Sciences to over 80,000 unique students and growing every day.

With the blessings of Allah, Most High, AlMaghrib is now the leading Institute teaching premier Islamic education in the West with the largest on-site student body. Year by year, we've set the standard and launched exciting new projects, inspired so many more to do great work in their communities, and raised the bar on how knowledge is not only sought...but is also loved!

AlMaghrib is exceptionally selective about its instructors to ensure that all of them are fluent in the language of instruction. It delights us and our student body that our seminars are taught by highly specialized scholars and educators who are among the best in their field, bar none.

Take the website for a spin: discover our seminars, explore the curriculum, find out about our high-impact projects, log in to your MyAlMaghrib Student Portal, and engage with us on our social networks. We think you will agree that what we offer by the Will of Allah is nothing but the best.

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